

Guidelines:

EIC Accelerator Plug-in

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1 The programme

1.1 About the EIC Accelerator

The headline of the EIC Accelerator is innovation, and with this programme, the European Commission aims to identify and implement so-called high-risk, high-gain innovations. Support will be provided to bring a product or solution from the demonstration stage to a successful market introduction.

The EIC Accelerator funds the development of groundbreaking technologies with significant market potential, with a focus on scaling up both the technology being developed and the company involved.

For the EIC Accelerator, the majority of support will be allocated through open calls. There will be no requirement for the technological solution being worked on to be within a specific thematic area. Therefore, it is possible to receive support for all thematic areas, as long as the development involves a ground-breaking technology or innovation with the potential for major market impact.

The challenges are based on the EU's priorities within the green transition, the digital domain, and a healthy society.

The EIC Accelerator is primarily targeted at SMEs, including start-ups and spin-outs. The instrument aims to take technological solutions from TRL 5/6 — that is, the demonstration of technology in a relevant environment — to market introduction. Applicants must be based in an EU or EU-associated country.

The technology being developed must have significant market potential — what is referred to in EU terms as impact innovations. This means that the solution brought to the market should make a profound impact on the market and the users it targets. The solution must have the potential to change lives while enabling the applicant company to profit from the solution and grow sustainably as a result.

The evaluation of an EIC Accelerator application will focus on the novelty of the solution, timing for market introduction, intellectual property rights (IPR), scalability potential, commercialization strategy, risk assessment, and the team responsible for executing the ambitious project. Additionally, applicants must demonstrate ambitions that extend beyond Denmark's borders — ideally aiming for a global market.

In general, applicants seek either grant only, investment only or blended finance. The investment may come either as an equity investment or as a loan guarantee.

Initially, the applicant submits a short stage 1 application. If this is deemed of sufficient quality, the applicant is invited to submit a full stage 2 application. The most qualified applicants are then invited to an interview round in Brussels, and based on this interview, they will either receive approval or rejection for funding. For further details and information about the EIC Accelerator programme, please refer to the EIC website: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-accelerator-0_en

1.2 The Plug-in – In short

The Plug-in is a pilot project where the Commission aims to gain experience by delegating the stage 1 application process to national or regional programmes. As a result, the Innobooster programme has been selected as the only Danish programme that can directly qualify projects for stage 2 without requiring a stage 1 application within the EU framework.

In 2025, the Innobooster programme is authorized to qualify 20 applications to advance directly to stage 2 of the EIC Accelerator.

1.3 Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply for access to the Plug-in, the applicant company must have received an Innobooster grant or have an active Missionbooster grant under the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER), with a minimum grant amount of DKK 1.5 million. Applicants can apply up to 6 months before the completion of the Innobooster project.

The applicant must have completed TRL level 5, meaning technology is validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies).

The completion of the previous Innobooster/Missionbooster project must not have occurred more than 22 months before the application deadline for which the company is applying. This date is calculated from the project's final payment. The project being applied for must build upon the idea from the previous Innobooster project.

Furthermore, the company must still meet the European Commission's definition of an SME. This means the company must have fewer than 250 employees and either an annual turnover of no more than EUR 50 million or a total annual balance sheet of no more than EUR 43 million.

1.4 What is applied for?

An application to Innovation Fund Denmark (IFD) Plug-in is solely an application for access to stage 2 of the EIC Accelerator programme. It is the responsibility of the applicant to apply to step 2 of the EIC Accelerator, and to follow all requirements set by the European Innovation Council. IFD cannot offer support for the step 2 application.

1.5 How long is the plug-in access to stage 2 valid?

The Plug-in grants the applicant access to apply for stage 2 of the EIC Accelerator programme within 12 months of the IFD notification of acceptance.

1.6 Where are the application rounds for the Plug-in publicised?

The deadlines for applications are continuously published on IFD's website.

2 Application

2.1 How to apply?

The application must be created and submitted via the designated link provided in the call text. The application must be written in English.

2.2 What must the application contain?

2.2.1 PIC number

To complete an application, the company must have a PIC number (Participant Identification Code), which is the identification number in the EU system. The number can be obtained by registering at the EU portal: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/participant-register>

2.2.2 Innobooster case number

The company must provide information about the specific Innobooster project on which the application is based. This includes providing the qualifying case number. Companies failing to provide a valid Innobooster case number will be rejected without any further assessment.

2.2.3 Naming the project

The applicant will be asked to assign the project an acronym of up to 20 characters, as well as a full project name. These names will need to be consistent throughout the entire process, including any potential conclusion of the EIC Accelerator project.

2.2.4 Project description

When filling out the application form, the company will be asked to provide a brief description of the project and to address the project's novelty and timing (quality of the idea), as well as its scalability potential and impact, which are related to the assessment criteria for the programme (see section 3.3).

2.2.5 Estimated budget

When submitting the application form, an indication of the estimated budget for the project must be provided. Read more about the funding possibilities on the EIC Accelerator homepage: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities/eic-accelerator_en

2.2.6 Declarations

In the application form, the applicant must confirm three conditions:

- That the company is still an SME established in an EU or HE-associated country
- That the company owns the rights to the project's IPR
- That the company understands that double funding for the project is not permitted

If one or more of these three conditions cannot be confirmed by the applicant, the application will be rejected without any further assessment.

2.2.7 Rejection of application

Failure to comply with the formal requirements in the application materials or the programme's application deadlines may result in an application being rejected without substantive review. Applications not submitted via e-grant will be rejected without substantive assessment.

2.2.8 Supplementary information

IFD will only consider the information provided in the application. Supplementary information submitted outside the application system, e.g. via email, will not be included in the evaluation of the application. After the application deadline, it is not possible to change the content of the application aside from correcting or updating any personal data, e.g. contact information.

3 Assessment

3.1 How does the assessment process take place

The first assessment step is an evaluation of whether the application meets the formal requirements outlined in these guidelines. If the application is rejected at this stage, an administrative rejection will be issued, meaning the application has not undergone a substantive review.

If the application meets the formal requirements, the actual assessment will take place. The evaluation will be based on the submitted materials that fall within the guidelines of the scheme. Additionally, the assessors will draw on their prior knowledge, which qualifies them as reviewers, as well as information that can be obtained from publicly available sources (e.g., literature and article databases, patent databases, and company databases) and online searches.

3.2 Who assesses the application?

Initially, the staff at IFD assess whether the application meets the formal requirements.

All applications that fulfil these requirements are then evaluated by both a primary reader and a secondary reader.

The primary reader is an external evaluator appointed by IFD.

The secondary reader is always a staff member from IFD with specific knowledge of the EIC Accelerator programme.

Since the primary reader's assessment is external, this evaluation will be sent to the applicant in a consultation of parties. Applicants should be aware that the assessment received during this process is only part of the overall evaluation basis; thus, the final assessment may yield different results than indicated in the forwarded evaluation.

These two reviewers will each give the project a score from 1 to 6. The project must not score lower than 2 on one or more criteria to be qualified. The qualified projects are ranked based on their average scores.

The 20 highest-ranked projects (according to the assessment criteria outlined below) will be qualified for step 2 of the EIC Accelerator.

In the case where two or more applications receive identical scores and are ranked such that only some of them fall within the top 20, the primary reviewers will hold a qualitative consensus meeting to determine the final ranking.

The final ranking is approved by the management of IFD.

The IFD Board of Directors oversee that the guidelines and described processes are followed.

Everyone involved in the assessment is subject to confidentiality and IFD's strict requirements regarding impartiality. A summary of IFD's rules on impartiality is available at www.innovationsfonden.dk.

3.3 How is the application assessed?

If the application meets the formal requirements outlined previously, it will be assessed based on the following two evaluation criteria:

- **Quality of the Idea**
- **Impact**

In the stage 2 application, the project will also be evaluated on the **Quality of Execution**; however, this aspect is not included in IFD's assessment.

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted based on the assessment criteria, with each criterion carrying equal weight.

Under each criterion, the following aspects are emphasized:

Quality of the Idea

- Clearly stating what the basis for the idea is and what is new and innovative about the idea.
- Project results sufficiently differ from the solutions already on the market
- The project has the potential to create new or significantly change the market situation
- Timing is right in relation to the market, users, societal and/or technological development, etc.
- The project have minimum completed TRL 5¹

Impact

- The project creates the opportunity for scaling the company, and develop new markets/significantly transform existing ones.
- The company has a clear and convincing vision of what the project can add to the company's business.
- That it is likely that there is a need, users, paying customers, and a market of a certain size.
- That the project, if it becomes a commercial success, can contribute with societal impact; economically, socially, environmentally, climate-wise or otherwise

The evaluation is based on the materials the applicant has submitted via e-grant. Additionally, the assessors will incorporate their prior knowledge, which qualifies them to serve as reviewers.

3.4 What happens after the application deadline?

Three to four weeks after the application deadline, the primary reader's assessments will be sent for consultation. The applicant will have 14 days to give a response. When the evaluation process has been concluded, the applicant will receive a response via E-grant.

¹ TRL5: Technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies), https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-2025-work-programme_en

3.5 What happens if the application is approved?

The applicant will receive a decision letter via E-grant. Please note that IFD decision letter is solely an indication that the application can proceed to stage 2 of the EIC Accelerator.

IFD will then forward project information to the EIC, which will subsequently invite the company to begin the application process for stage 2.

3.6 How long is the approval valid?

The Plug-in grants the applicant access to apply for stage 2 within 12 months of IFD notification of acceptance. If this opportunity is not utilized within this timeframe, it will lapse.

4 Handling of information

4.1 Registration of information

The e-grant application system will automatically record certain information. When you register as a user, e-grant will log your identity, IP address, and the timestamp of when the application is created or edited.

4.2 Applicants responsibility

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the information in the electronic application is accurate and that the application is submitted before the deadline specified in the call.

IFD does not request additional information for processing the application. Moreover, supplementary materials and other documentation submitted with the application beyond the specified application materials will not be included in the evaluation, except basic company data such as changes in name, address, registration number and contact details.

The applicant is obligated to promptly inform IFD of any significant changes that may affect the application's eligibility.

4.3 Disclosure of personal information to EIC

If an applicant receives a positive decision, information about the project and the applicant's contact details will be forwarded to the EIC.

4.4 Privacy policy

We process your personal data in accordance with the law, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act, as outlined in IFD privacy policy.

5 Disclosure of information

Please be aware that the title of the application should not contain information that may be sensitive to your business, as IFD may, without further notification to you as an applicant, disclose lists containing information about the company

name, project title, applied amount, decision outcome (rejection/approval), and potentially the investment amount of all incoming Innobooster applications upon request (e.g., through Danish Access to Public Administration Files Act (in Danish: "Offentlighedsloven").

Innovationsfonden will always publish an overview of applications (including company name, CVR number, project title, and grant amount) that receive an investment from the foundation.

Applications submitted to IFD are treated confidentially. However, please note that a request for access to submitted Innobooster applications may be made under the Danish Access to Public Administration Files Act (in Danish: "Offentlighedsloven") and other relevant Danish laws. In such cases, IFD will, in dialogue with you as an applicant, ensure that sensitive business information and/or other information that, according to law, cannot be disclosed is protected and not released.

6 About these guidelines

6.1 Legal basis

The present guidelines are issued pursuant to Section 18, Subsection 2, 1st sentence of Act No. 306 of 29 March 2014 on Innovation Fund Denmark, as amended by Act No. 384 of 26 April 2017, Act No. 1518 of 18 December 2018, and most recently Act No. 1188 of 8 June 2021, as well as Executive Order No. 1150 of 25 October 2017 on the grant function, etc., under Innovation Fund Denmark. The present guidelines are issued pursuant to Section 18, Subsection 2, of Act No. 1660 of 12 August 2021 on Innovation Fund Denmark and Section 2, Subsection 4, of Executive Order No. 1150 of 25 October 2017 on the grant function, etc., under Innovation Fund Denmark.

We would like to inform applicants that Innovation Fund Denmark adheres to the guidelines for international research and innovation (URIS). For more information, please read here: <https://ufm.dk/publikationer/2022/afrapportering-udvalg-om-retningslinjer-for-internationalt-forsknings-og-innovationssamarbejde>.

7 Technical disclaimer

The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for e-grant and is required to inform applicants about any errors that make e-grant so inaccessible that it affects their ability to submit e-applications within the deadline. Information about accessibility will be available on the Ministry's website/Driftsstatus.

In particularly serious cases, IFD may extend the application deadline for all relevant applicants. This will also be posted on the Ministry's website/Operational Status and on IFD's website/Søg investering

IFD and the Ministry of Education and Research are not liable for any loss or damage resulting from misinformation due to software errors, calculation mistakes, transmission errors, or similar issues, nor for any claims arising from improper use of e-grant.